

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS**

KASHYAP P. PATEL,

Plaintiff,

v.

CESARE FRANK FIGLIUZZI, JR.,

Defendant.

Case No.: _____

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

COMPLAINT

1. Kashyap P. Patel brings this lawsuit to hold Defendant, Cesare Frank Figliuzzi, Jr., a former FBI official, accountable for defamation. Defendant is of course free to criticize the leadership of the FBI, but he crossed the legal line by fabricating a specific lie about Director Patel. While being interviewed on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," Defendant reported that Director Patel was spending more time at nightclubs in Las Vegas than on the seventh floor of the Hoover Building. Defendant knew that this was a lie when he said it.

PARTIES

2. Plaintiff Kashyap P. Patel is an individual who is a resident and citizen of Nevada. He is the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

3. Defendant Cesare Frank Figliuzzi, Jr. is an individual who is a resident and citizen of the State of Texas.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this cause of action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1332 as there is complete diversity of citizenship and the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.

5. Defendant is subject to personal jurisdiction in Texas because he is a Texas resident.

6. Venue for this action is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391 because Defendant resides in this District.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

7. Director Patel is the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), having been sworn in on February 20, 2025.

8. Defendant is the former assistant director for counterintelligence at the FBI.

9. On May 2, 2025, Defendant was interviewed on the MSNBC show, “Morning Joe.”

10. During this segment, Defendant stated: “Reportedly, [Director Patel has] been visible at nightclubs far more than he has been on the seventh floor of the Hoover building.”

11. This statement is entirely false.

12. Since becoming Director of the FBI, Director Patel has not spent a single minute inside of a nightclub.

13. There was no basis for Defendant’s fabrication, and Defendant’s use of the weasel word, “reportedly,” is itself a fabrication, as Defendant did not rely on reporting by any other person. Defendant made up the story out of whole cloth, and by using the word “reportedly,” attempts to distance himself from what is a maliciously false and defamatory statement.

14. Even MSNBC, on May 5, 2025, called Defendant's lie a "misstatement," and noted that it has not been "verified."

15. Defendant fabricated this story to discredit Director Patel because of Defendant's clear animus toward Director Patel.

16. Defendant previously wrote, "Patel is one of the most ill-suited Cabinet nominees—not just now, but of all time." And, "The FBI's motto is 'Fidelity, Bravery, Integrity.' The record suggests that Patel doesn't possess any of those traits."

17. Defendant also wrote, "It isn't just that Patel is wholly unqualified to lead the pre-eminent law enforcement and intelligence agency in the nation and perhaps the world . . . Patel's particular problem goes far beyond competence: His record shows no devotion to the Constitution, but blind allegiance to Trump."

18. Defendant even "warned that Patel may be even more dangerous than the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover."

19. Furthermore, as a partisan commentator, Defendant was motivated to sensationalize, and in this case, fabricate a story to self-promotingly advance his own name recognition, at the expense of Director Patel.

20. Accordingly, Director Patel brings this suit to hold Defendant accountable for his lie.

CAUSES OF ACTION

COUNT I

Defamation and Defamation Per Se

21. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the above paragraphs as though set forth fully herein.

22. Defendant falsely stated that: "Reportedly, [Director Patel has] been visible at nightclubs far more than he has been on the seventh floor of the Hoover building."

23. This assertion is entirely false. Director Patel has not even stepped foot in a nightclub since becoming Director of the FBI, nor has this been “reported” to Defendant.

24. This statement constitutes defamation per se because the defamatory meaning is obvious on its face. Falsely claiming that the newly appointed Director of the FBI, the top federal law enforcement official in the nation, has been absent from his position, and has been, instead, spending the majority of his time in nightclubs, injures Director Patel in his profession.

25. Defendant published his statement knowing it was false or with reckless disregard for the truth. Defendant fabricated a specific lie: that Director Patel has spent more time in nightclubs than at his job, damaging Director Patel in his profession. Defendant had no basis for this statement, and he also fabricated the claim that this information was reported to him, to hide from liability and to make the insidious insinuation that he was privy to insider information. Even MSNBC admitted that there is no basis for Defendant’s claim. Defendant obviously did not reach out to Director Patel for comment before maliciously spreading his lie. Instead, Defendant fabricated this story because of his readily apparent animus toward Director Patel, his partisan desire to undermine the new leadership of the FBI under President Donald J. Trump, and to promote himself as someone with insider knowledge.

26. Defendant made his statement knowingly, intentionally, willfully, wantonly, and maliciously, with intent to harm Director Patel, or in blatant disregard for the substantial likelihood of causing him harm.

27. Defendant’s statements have directly and proximately caused Director Patel to suffer actual damages. These damages were foreseeable.

28. As a direct and proximate result of the misconduct of Defendant, Director Patel is entitled to compensatory, special, and punitive damages, in an

amount to be proven at trial, as well as disgorgement of all income Defendant has made by virtue of his lies about Director Patel.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, Kashyap P. Patel, respectfully requests this Court enter a judgment in his favor and grant relief against Defendant as follows:

- a. An award of compensatory, special, and punitive damages in excess of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000.00); and
- b. Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and appropriate to protect Director Patel's rights and interests.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

Dated: June 2, 2025

KASHYAP P. PATEL
By Counsel

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Jason C. Greaves
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